

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2181

DIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 2281

E O 11652: XGDS-2

TAHI: PFORHF ACOM, US, CD

SUBJ: GOC PROTEST FOLLOWS CONFISCATION OF EMBASSY EMPLOYEE'S
CITIZENS BAND WALKIE-TALKIE

REF: NDJAMENA 412, STATE 45480

1. AT APPROXIMATELY 1845 HOURS AUGUST 23 I RECEIVED TELEPHONE CALL FROM DATT WHO REPORTED THAT MEMBER OF HIS STAFF, TECHNICAL SERGEANT M. MENZEL, HAD BEEN TESTING PERSONAL 1/10 WATT TRANSCIEVER IN DAO LAND ROVER AT ROND POINT, ONE OF PRINCIPAL NDJAMENA RESIDENTIAL CROSSROADS, WHEN THREE VEHICLES INCLUDING GOC COMMANDING GENERAL ODINGAR TRANSITTED ROND POINT. GENERAL ODINGAR SPOTTED MR. MENZEL AND TRANSCIEVER, STOPPED VEHICLES, AND PERSONALLY AND POLITELY ASKED MR. MENZEL WHAT HE WAS DOING. MR. MENZEL STATED THAT HE WAS TESTING TRANSCIEVER, ADDING, IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER INQUIRY, THAT SUCH CB TRANSCIEVERS AVAILABLE TO ALL AMERICANS IN U.S. AND DID NOT REQUIRE USG APPROVAL TO OPERATE. AT REQUEST GENERAL ODINGAR, MR. MENZEL SURRENDERED TRANSCIEVER AND THE GENERAL'S CONVOY PROCEEDED.

2. AT 1915 HOURS I RECEIVED REQUEST FROM CHIEF OF PROTOCOL TO CALL UPON ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER, SECRETARY OF STATE GALMAI
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YOUSSOBOMI. I CALLED AT RESIDENCE OF SECSTATE GALMAI AT 1930,

AND WAS CORDIALLY RECEIVED BY BAREFOOTED ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AND IMMACULATELY UNIFORMED MINISTER OF INTERIOR MAJOR KOTIGA, WHO WERE HAVING QUIET DRINK TO ACCOMPANIMENT AMERICAN JAZZ. AFTER INITIAL INFORMALITIES, GALMAI STATED THAT EMBASSY EMPLOYEE (HE HAD VEHICLE NUMBER BUT NO NAME) HAD BEEN OBSERVED COMMUNICATING ON RADIO TRANSCEIVER, WHICH HAD BEEN CONFISCATED. GALMAI STATED THAT EMPLOYEE HAD SAID THAT SUCH TRANSCEIVERS COULD BE PURCHASED AND OPERATED WITHOUT REGULATION IN U.S., BUT THAT HE WISHED TO REMIND ME THAT UNAUTHORIZED PRIVATE RADIO NETWORKS STRICTLY AGAINST CHADIAN LAW, AND THAT THEY COULD NOT BE OPERATED WITHOUT SPECIFIC PERMISSION OF THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR. GALMAI STATED THAT HE WAS INSTRUCTED TO ASK OF ME THE IDENTITY OF THE EMBASSY EMPLOYEE, WITH WHOM HE WAS COMMUNICATING, THE REASON FOR WHICH HE WAS COMMUNICATING, WAS IT TRUE THAT SUCH EQUIPMENT COULD BE OPERATED IN THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT REGULATION, AND HOW DID THIS EQUIPMENT ENTER CHAD? FURTHER, HE REQUESTED THAT HE BE FURNISHED WITH THE SECOND TRANSCEIVER IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE SET CAPABILITIES.

3. I RESPONDED THAT SUCH EQUIPMENT WAS EXCEEDINGLY COMMON IN THE U.S., THAT TRANSCEIVERS OF THIS LIMITED NATURE WERE CONSIDERED AS TOYS, AND THAT THEY WERE PERMITTED TO ORDINARY CITIZENS UNDER U.S. LAW. I SAID THAT I HAD BEEN ALERTED TO THE PROBLEM BY THE SUPERIOR OFFICER OF THE EMPLOYEE CONCERNED, AND WHILE I DID NOT YET HAVE ALL THE DETAILS, I COULD STATE THAT THE EMPLOYEE WHO LIVED APPROXIMATELY FOUR BLOCKS FROM WHERE HE WAS OBSERVED WAS SIMPLY ATTEMPTING TO ASCERTAIN THE RANGE OF THE TRANSCEIVER. I ADDED THAT WHILE SUCH TRANSCEIVERS WERE CONSIDERED TOYS IN THE U.S., I COULD UNDERSTAND THAT THEY MIGHT BE A CAUSE OF CONCERN TO THE GOC, AND THAT I CONSIDERED THIS INCIDENT TO BE AN EXPRESSION OF LACK OF JUDGMENT ON PART OF EMBASSY EMPLOYEE. I AGREED TO DELIVER TO ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER SECOND TRANSCEIVER SO THAT GOC MIGHT VERIFY LIMITED RANGE. I SAID THAT I PRESUMED EMPLOYEE WAS COMMUNICATING WITH SPOUSE, BUT I WOULD VERIFY THIS IN MORNING. (THIS LATER CONFIRMED.) I SAID I PRESUMED THAT EMPLOYEE BROUGHT RADIO WITH HIM IN PERSONAL EFFECTS. UNTIL THIS POINT IN CONVERSATION, BOTH MINISTERS APPEARED MORE INTERESTED IN THE CHEAPNESS OF THE EQUIPMENT AND ITS READY AVAILABILITY TO U.S. CITIZENS THAN IN INCIDENT ITSELF. THE SECSTATE THEN ASKED ME THE NAME OF THE EMPLOYEE IN QUESTION

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AND WHAT POSITION HE HELD IN THE EMBASSY. I IDENTIFIED HIM BY NAME, AND SAID THAT HE WAS A TECHNICAL SERGEANT IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEFENSE ATTACHE. (THE LAND-ROVER IN QUESTION IS COMMONLY KNOWN AS A DAO VEHICLE.) THIS, NOT SURPRISINGLY, RAISED EYEBROWS.

4. SECSTATE GALMAI, WHO DEARLY PREFERS AVOID CONFRONTATION OF ANY KIND, SUMMARIZED BRIEFLY GOC LAW AND POLICY, STRESSED GOOD

RELATIONS BETWEEN USG AND GOC, AND SAID THAT MINISTER OF INTERIOR WOULD ADD FEW WORDS. MINISTER OF INTERIOR SAID HE HAD NOTHING TO ADD, BEYOND HOPE THAT I WOULD UNDERSTAND GOC POSITION. GALMAI THEN ASKED IF THERE ADDITIONAL USG NETWORKS (RESEAUX) OF THIS TYPE IN CHAD. I REPORTED THAT I WOULD ENQUIRE AMONG CHILDREN OF EMBASSY, AS MY OWN THEN TWELVE YEAR OLD DAUGHTER HAD HAD A SOMEWHAT MORE POWERFUL SYSTEM IN WASHINGTON.

5. ABOVE CONVERSATION ENDED WITH REPEATED APOLOGIES FOR DISTURBING ME DURING THE EVENING HOURS, AND WAS AMIABLE AND CORDIAL THROUGHOUT. BUT AS ACTING FONMIN ESCORTED ME TO CAR, HE STATED THAT HE WAS REQUESTED TO CALL ME IN (CONVOQUER) AT COMMAND OF PRESIDENT.

6. COMMENT: WHETHER OR NOT WE CAN GLOSS OVER THIS UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT WILL BE DEPENDENT UPON DECISIONS REACHED BY PRESIDENCY AND NOT BY SECSTATE OR MINISTER INTERIOR. I THINK WE CAN PROBABLY LIVE WITH IT, AND THIS MORNING (AUGUST 24) I WILL, AS PROMISED, GIVE SECSTATE GALMAI SECOND TRANSCEIVER SO THAT HE MAY VERIFY OPERATION, AS WELL AS U.S. CATALOG OFFERING CB TRANSCEIVERS FOR SALE TO GENERAL PUBLIC. UNHAPPILY, HOWEVER, THIS INCIDENT RAISES QUESTION OF EMBASSY EMERGENCY CB NETWORK. WE HAVE CB TRANSCEIVERS IN AMBASSADOR'S AND PAO'S VEHICLES, WHOSE OPERATION IS WELL KNOWN TO EMBASSY CHAUFFEURS AND IS OBVIOUS TO ANYONE ELSE STIMULATED BY THE VEHICLES' AERIALS AND CURIOSITY TO LOOK INTO THE INTERIOR OF THESE CARS. SENIOR EMBASSY OFFICERS ALL HAVE GE CB TRANSCEIVERS WHICH CANNOT BE KEPT SECRET FROM THEIR SERVANTS. WE HAVE, AS I SEE IT, TWO OPTIONS AT THE MOMENT: (A) TO WAIT THIS ONE OUT UNTIL WE DETERMINE WHAT GOC REACTION MAY BE; OR, (B) AT EARLY OCCASION DESCRIBE TO SECSTATE EMB CB SYSTEM, STATING THAT SYSTEM IS PART OF COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY DESCRIBED TO MFA PREVIOUSLY (REFTELS) AND THAT IT HAS PRINCIPAL PURPOSE PERSONAL PROTECTION

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OF AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WITH TRANSCEIVER MOUNTED IN AMBASSADOR'S LIMOUSINE AND MONITORS AT SELECTED U.S. DIPLOMATIC RESIDENCES AROUND TOWN. IT IS OUR IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT US FCC REGULATIONS PROHIBIT OPERATION EVEN CB EQUIPMENT IN U.S. BY FOREIGN NATIONALS WITHOUT SPECIFIC INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT, AND WE THEREFORE CANNOT OFFER RECIPROCITY, SHOULD GOC SUGGEST THIS APPROACH. NONETHELESS, I AM INCLINED TO VOTE FOR OPTION B AT MOMENT. I ANTICIPATE BEING CALLED IN WITHIN NEXT 48 HOURS TO HEAR GOC'S DECISION ON MATTER AND WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS PROMPTLY.DWYER

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